LIFE IN DEATH,

OR

Support for ſouls under deepe Preſſures.

Being A

SERMON

Preached *January* 13. 1660.

at *Mary Staynings*, *London*.

By *C. Helme* Miniſter of the Goſpell.

O ye dry bones, heare ye the Word of the Lord, Ezek. 37. 4.

Thou which haſt ſhewed me great and ſore troubles, ſhalt quicken me againe, and ſhalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth, Pſal. 71. 20.

My ſoul cleaveth unto the duſt; quicken thou me according to thy Word, Pſal. 119. 25.

Tutius auditur veritas quàm predicatur. *Aug.*
Nondum fælix es, ſi non te turba deriſerit. *Sen.*

London, Printed in the Yeare, 1660.

To my beloved Friends the Inhabitants of MARY STAININGS *LONDON.*

SIRS,

YOur favourable opinion of me, I ſuppoſe, cauſed you to invite me to the uſe of your empty Pulpit, the laſt Lords day in the Afternoon, and a deſire to ſerve Chriſt and you, prevailed with me to embrace the opportunity, when according to my weak meaſure and ſhort preparation, I did apply my ſelf as in the ſight of God, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to your ſouls: but ſome there preſent have rendred me evil for good, the Lord pardon them, and have aſperſed my Sermon and perſon to my great prejudice: It is neceſſity therefore, not choice, that preſſeth me to the Preſſe. *I am called to the Bar, and this poor Sermon is my witneſſe, that I am not guilty of the things they lay to my charge, Rhetorick and Flouriſhes may become an Advocate, but plain truth in broken langnage will paſſe in a witneſſe. I have* Pauls *plea for my impoliteneſſe* οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς λόγοις 1 Cor. 2. 4.

Had not the miſ-underſtanding or prejudice of ſome abuſed the ear of the Honourable Lord Major *of this City, I ſhould have paſſed ſilently under all their ſharp arrowes, bitter words, calumniating characters, having in ſome meaſure learned to paſſe through* good report and bad report: *But leaſt their diſguiſing me with obnoxious names, may render me a more diſſigured mark to ſhoot at, I would appear in my own ſimple colours, in which if I ſuffer, I ſhall rejoyce.*

And firſt, I am not (as is ſaid of me) a Quaker, *an* Anabaptiſt, rebellious Fifth-Monarchy-Man, *but for matter of Doctrine doe hold the ſame with the* 39 Articles, *the* Helvetian *confeſſion, and confeſſion of other reformed Churches; and for Diſcipline, I doe profeſſe the Congregationall way, as it is at large ſet forth in the* Declaration of the Faith and Order, owned and practiſed in the Congregational Churches in England, *conſented to by their Elders and Miniſters,* Octob: 12. 1658.

I am forced by my Calumniators to trouble you with more of my ſelfe, then prudence or ingenuity would otherwiſe permit; I am (I ſay) forced by them to let you know that I am a poor Gentleman born, a mean Scholar by education, and a Miniſter, though unworthy, by calling; and though I deſpiſe not, but honour the gifts of the Spirit of God under a blew Apron, as well as under a black Caſſock, yet never was I of any mechanick Trade, as is falſely reported, nor do I allow to any the Office of a Miniſter, but ſuch as are thereunto lawfully called.

And

And whereas they ſay I am an Up-ſtart Preacher; *I anſwer, I have been a publick Miniſter above thirteen years, not without ſome ſealing teſts of my miſſion from God, to whom be Glory. If you ask me of what Religion I was fifteen yeers ſince, I muſt give you the ſame anſwer as Mr.* Philpot *the Martyr gave to Biſhop* Bonner *upon the ſame Queſtion,* Truly I was then of no Religion at all, *but a child of darkneſſe, an ignorant enemy to the power of Godlineſſe, and therefore cannot but experimentally with* Paul *admire Free Grace,* 1 Tim. 1. 12, 13. I thank Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who hath enabled me, putting me into the Miniſtry, who was before a Blaſphemer, and a Perſecuter, and injurious. *It is no new thing with me to ſuffer for the Goſpels ſake, for I have, ever ſince the Lord wrought a change in me, and to this very day doe ſuffer the like things of my own Kindred and Country-men.*

As for this Dreadfull, Dangerous, Seditious Sermon, (*as it is by ſome ſtiled*) *Let it ſpeake for it ſelfe, I have not ſtopped it's mouth in any one particular paſſage. All that I can expect from the Ingenious* Chriſtian Reader, *is to give this poor extruded, and extorted piece, this Character, viz.* A Good Truth badly Mannaged: *It may be called,* Rudis indigeſtaq; moles, *I plead not for the* Logick *of it; that which ſavours of fleſh and frailty baniſh your thoughts, and let me carry it as a further burthen to humble*

ble me, what is of Chriſt and his Spirit keep, and let not the envious man ſteale it away. Now that God who is able by weake meanes to effect great matters, bleſſe this poor weake word to you, and this unexpected affliction to me, and grant that what is ſowed in tears may be reaped in joy.

Your reall friend to ſerve you
in the Lord,

Jan. 19. 1660. C. Helme.

LIFE

Life in Death,

OR

Support for Souls under deepe Preſſures.

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2 Cor. 1. 8, 9.

For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Aſia, *that we were preſſed out of meaſure, above ſtrength, inſomuch that we deſpaired even of life.*

But we had the ſentence of death in our ſelves, that we ſhould not truſt in our ſelves, but in God which raiſeth the dead.

THE Apoſtle in this Chapter to the 12. verſe urgeth many arguments to perſwade the *Corinthians* not to take offence at the Croſſe of Chriſt.

Verſ. 3. He tells them that in an afflicted condition, when the affliction is upon

on the account of the Goſpel, God doth ſet out himſelf in his comfortable and ſoul-refreſhing appearances, *The Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort*, and therefore the Croſſe ſhould not offend.

Verſ. 4. He ſhews them how beneficial his ſufferings will be to them, God minds good to them in it; he is tempted, troubled, afflicted, and in this condition, comforted and ſupported by the more then ordinary revelation of the fatherly love of God in Chriſt, that he may be furniſhed with experiences, to help them in their diſtreſſes; add to this Verſ. 6.

Verſ. 5. He further ſweetens the Croſſe to them, in that he had experimentally found the heavier his afflictions were which he endured for Chriſt, the more abundant were his conſolations and refreſhments which he received from Chriſt. We are apt to compare our weakneſſe to the ſtrength and weight of afflictions that may come upon us, and ſo diſpond and walk heavily; but let us remember, abundant ſufferings for Chriſt, or as the Text ſaith, *of Chriſt*, (for they are his ſufferings,) are uſually accompanied with abundant conſolations in and from Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14.

Now to hold you no longer from the Text it ſelfe, the Apoſtle here gives them one notable example of his great ſuffering for Chriſt. *He was preſſed above meaſure, deſpaired of life*, and yet in this ſo ſad a condition God was with him, upheld him, when he had ſpent all his own ſtrength and ſpirits.

ſpirits, God came in with his ſtrength and Spirit and relieved him, and therefore learn by my experience not to doubt of help in your greateſt preſſures, for to that purpoſe, I tell you how low I was brought, and yet was relieved by Jeſus Chriſt.

For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble, &c. In the words you have

Firſt, The extremity of *Pauls* ſufferings for Jeſus Chriſt. *We were preſſed out of meaſure, above ſtrength, in ſo much that we deſpaired of life.*

Secondly, The end of his ſufferings, or Gods deſign in them, *We had the ſentence of death in our ſelves, that we ſhould not truſt in our ſelves, but in God that raiſeth the dead.*

For the firſt, *Pauls* extream ſufferings in *Aſia*, ſome conceive it to be at that time when that great tumult was raiſed by *Demetrius*, in behalf of *Diana*, mentioned *Acts* 19. 22. to the end of the Chapter; there you find *Paul* and his companions ruſhed upon, dragged, &c. Out of the Pulpit into the Priſon, was no unuſuall thing with *Paul*.

For the ſecond, Gods end in *Pauls* extream ſufferings, was to wean him from all ſelf-confidence; *That we ſhould not truſt in our ſelves, but in God that raiſeth the dead.* *Paul* is taught where to put his confidence.

Firſt, Negatively, *Not in our ſelves*, God doth bring ſome great affliction, or let out ſome fierce temptation upon his own children to beat

them out of ſelf, that they may be able experimentally to ſay, it is not I that overcome ſuch a luſt, it is not I that eſcaped ſuch an on-ſet of Satan, but Chriſt that dwelleth in me; this proud Pronoun I and My, will perk into the Throne of God, arrogate Divine Honour, attribute to it ſelf all graces, gifts, comforts, deliverances from temptations, if God take not ſome courſe with it, and bring us not down at his feet, as he did *David*, 1 Chron. 29. 11, 12, 14. *We have given thee of thine own*, All is thine, my prayers, perſeverance, comforts, enlargements, all is thine, and from thee.

Secondly, Poſitively, *But in God that raiſeth the dead.* God is pleaſed to give out himſelf to his people under ſeverall names, according to their ſeveral wants, or duties they are called unto. When *Abraham* was to leave his Country, and friends, his habitation and inheritance, and go into a Land he knew not, and might well doubt what proviſion would be made for him in a ſtrange Country, God preſents himſelf to him by his name *All-ſufficient*. Gen. 17. When his poor people are dejected, then he is called, the *God that comforteth them that are caſt downe*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 6. when in tribulation, then he preſents himſelf by the name of *God that comforteth in all tribulation*, 2 Corinth: 1. 4. When a ſoul is under ſtrong and prevalent temptations, and would fly to God for help, but doubteth whether he will hear, then he is *called a God hearing Prayer*, Pſal. 65. 2. *O thou that heareſt prayer, iniquities prevail a-*

gainſt

gainſt me. And as here in the Text, *when deſpairing of life, preſſed above meaſure,* above all humane help, then *the God that raiſeth up the dead.* Its a great part of our chriſtian skill, to apply to God cloathed, with thoſe names that moſt ſuite our preſent condition; and its a great part of the Devils work to obſcure thoſe names of God from us when we ſtand in need of them.

Doct. 1. *That God doth ſometimes bring his choſen people under ſore Preſſures, and paſſeth a ſentence of death upon all that is dear unto them.*

Doct. 2. *That God hath bleſſed and gracious ends in afflicting his people, and paſſing a ſentence of death upon them.*

Doct. 3. *That when we are preſſed above meaſure, and have a ſentence of death upon our joy, comfort, liberty, its our duty not to truſt in our ſelves, but in God that raiſeth up the dead.*

For the proof of the firſt Doct: walk but with *Ezekiel* in the Valley which is full of bones, and you may be confirmed in this truth, *Ezek.* 37. *They lay in the open Valley, and loe they were very dry.* And for New Teſtament times, *John* in *Revel.* 11. 7, 8, 9. &c. will give us ſatisfaction. Thus in general.

Secondly, Sometimes there is a ſentence of death upon our inward comforts; they may

be eclipſed, and ſo buried that when we ſeek for them, we cannot find them; this was *Davids* caſe, Pſal. 51. 12. *Reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation*, thou haſt taken it away for preſent, reſtore it. *David* was withered and dead as to inward comfort and joy, and therefore verſ. 8. he cryes out, *Make me to hear joy and gladneſs*; oh let me once more have a good look, a comfortable word from my God.

Thirdly, Hope may have a ſentence of death upon it, as to the fulfilling of ſome eminent choice promiſe. This our Lord Jeſus puts out of queſtion by that queſtion of his, Luke 18. 8. *Nevertheleſſe when the ſon of man cometh, ſhall he find faith upon the earth?* Upon the like account we have the Church of the Jews publiſhing their deſpondency, Ezek. 37. 11. *Behold they ſay our bones are dryed, our hope is loſt, we are cut off for our parts.*

Fourthly, Nay ſometimes Mortification it ſelf may ſeem to have a death upon it, I mean God may let out an old crucified corruption upon us, and give Satan a commiſſion to agitate it, that we may feel its ſtrength and our own feebleneſſe, and our conſtant need of the grace of Chriſt: Thus it was with *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 7. *Paul* ſaw hereby what a hard task he ſhould have with one luſt, without conſtant ſupplyes from Chriſt: Temptations indeed are buffetings to Saints, embraces to wicked men.

Many more particulars might be added, but I ſhall inſtance but one more, and that is Liber-

ty,

ty, Chriſtian Liberty. God ſometimes doth paſſe a ſentence of death upon the Chriſtian Liberty of his people; the Old and New Teſtaments are full of proofs of this, beſides prophane Hiſtory: And when I ſpeak of Liberty, I would not be underſtood as if I pleaded for carnal liberty, for liberty to ſin, liberty to ſcorn, revile, and reproach the Ordinances and Miniſters of the Goſpel, liberty for blaſphemy and damnable errors, but liberty to worſhip God according as we are perſwaded in our conſciences by his Word.

Brethren pardon me if I digreſſe a little upon this Subject. We muſt lye down in the duſt, and acknowledge to our ſhame, that we knew not how to prize Liberty, to uſe it, or to improve it.

Firſt, To prize it, we valued our liberty to meet and pray, and partake of Gods holy Ordinances, at a low rate, except we might have this and that, liberty was worth little, but now experience tells us it was a rich mercy. *Experientia Magiſtra ſtultorum*, we have learned now to prize it.

Secondly, To uſe it, How did ſome abuſe it to licentiouſneſſe, others uſe it as a cloak of maliciouſneſſe? how did ſome ſnuffe at it, neglect opportunities, when the jawes of many precious Miniſters were unyoaked, as the Prophet phraſeth it, *Hoſea* 11. 4. And meat was laid before us, how did we refuſe to feed upon wholſom food? ſome feeding upon aſhes, others returning to their vomit, and few, very few of us returning to the moſt high. Thirdly,

Thirdly, To improve it, as thoſe *Acts* 9. 31. *Then had the Churches reſt throughout all Judea, &c. and were edified and walking in the feare of the Lord, and in the comfort of the holy Ghoſt were multiplied.*

Queſt. *What would you have us doe in this caſe.*

Anſw. Firſt, I ſhall tell you what you muſt not doe.

Uſe no unlawfull violent meanes to obtaine Liberty. You ſee what a ſhame to Religion the practiſes of ſome men have brought upon all the profeſſions of this Kingdome that differ in diſcipline from the Nationall way. I know I need not preſſe you to this, I ſee many of you here preſent, who have from firſt to laſt appeared in Armes againſt the unwarrantable and inhumane practiſes of theſe men.

Secondly, What you muſt doe.

Firſt, Be abaſed in the ſight of God for all your abuſe and miſ-improvement of Liberty, and juſtifie God in all that is come upon us; ſit downe by the waters of *Babilon*, and weep to remember *Zion*.

Secondly, Keep your ſouls from ſinfull intanglements, ſuperſtitious inthrallments, ſtand faſt in that liberty whereby Chriſt Jeſus hath made you free; and as the Apoſtle adviſeth in the like caſe, *Col.* 2. 8. *Beware leaſt any man ſpoyle you through Philoſophy, and vaine deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the World, and not after Chriſt.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Be much in ſecret Prayer, pouring forth ſtrong cries to the Lord, that he would ſo encline the hearts of thoſe in authority, that we might have liberty to ſerve our God without feare in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe all the dayes of our lives; that the Goſpell in the Doctrine of it, and all its adminiſtrations may in power and purity run and be glorified; and if your own ſouls are of ſo little value to you that their ſalvation will not enforce you to this duty, yet oh, pray, pray for your children: Its a fearfull thing to bring forth children to the ſword and to the famine, *Jer.* 18. 21. But oh, to bring forth children to ſpirituall famine and the ſpirituall ſword is a thouſand times worſe. *Amos* 8. 11, 12, 13. *I will ſend a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, and a thirſt for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord*, &c. *In that day ſhall the faire Virgins and young men faint for thirſt.* Oh when your little ones look you in the face, let it move you to pity their ſouls; the language of their looks is, father, mother pity my ſoul, pray for the liberty and power of the Goſpel, that my poore ſoul be not famiſhed; for indeed all other ſervices and obſervances, as they are not inſtituted, ſo neither are they bleſſed to the converſion of ſinners to Jeſus Chriſt. Pardon this large digreſſion, and ſo I ſhall come to the ſecond Point.

Doct.

Doct. 2. *That God hath bleſſed and gracious ends in afflicting his people, and paſſing a ſentence of death upon them.*

This we ſee proved in this ſore preſſure of *Paul*, he was hereby taught to live more out of himſelf. So alſo in the calamitous diſtreſſes that came upon *Job*, the Lord had gracious ends in them, *Jam.* 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have ſeen the end of the Lord. David, Manaſſes*, nay all Gods people can ſay, it was well for me that I was afflicted, I could not well have been without this chaſtiſement. Briefly, take Gods own word what his great ends are in all the preſſures he brings upon his children, and you will conclude them bleſſed and gracious, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his ſin*; this is Gods end in our preſſures.

Secondly, God doth ſometime paſſe a ſentence of death upon us, and all that is deare to us, for the mortifying our confidence in all creatures. *Pſal.* 142. 4, 5, 6. *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me, no man cared for my ſoul: O Lord, I ſaid thou art my refuge and my portion*, Pſal. 60. 11. Jer. 3. 23.

Thirdly, another end is, that he may endeare his favours to us; when we have inward comforts, and outward advantages to feed and ſtrengthen

ſtrengthen our ſouls, we are apt not to give them their true value; therefore God takes them ſometimes away that we may know the worth of them: This we ſee made good in *David*, when he was baniſhed the publick worſhip of God, how doth his ſoul prize it? how doth his ſpirit thirſt after it? *Pſal.* 63. 1, 2, 5. *My ſoul thirſteth for thee, my fleſh longeth for thee in a dry and thirſty Land where no water is, to ſee thy power and thy glory, as I have ſeen thee in the Sanctuary.* Now he ſees the difference between bread and aſhes, between fatning and famiſhing food; the preſence and power of God in his Ordinances was ſoul fatning marrowy food to *David*, *verſ.* 5. *My ſoul ſhall be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſſe*; and ſo indeed are they to the people of God, *Pſal.* 36. 8. Now a man that hath been fed at a full Table, wholſome dyet, nouriſhing meat, if he be brought into reſtraint, and hath nothing but traſh to eat, filthy beaſtly diet, he will ſoon find the difference, he will then cry out, Oh that I were fed as I have been fed.

Fourthly, God hereby tryeth the faith and faithfullneſſe of his people, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. You are in tribulation that your faith may be tryed, and ſo faithfullneſſe. Tribulation upon the power of godlineſſe, will kick off and diſcover the empty profeſſors of godlineſſe, *Mat.* 13. 20, 21.

Fifthly, God hereby maketh manifeſt certaine truths of the higher forme, he teacheth us to know experimentally ſome hard leſſons that we

knew but in the notion before; to inſtance in one: *e.g. That a changed condition is alwayes accompanied with the hatred of the World*: This is a truth Chriſt himſelf teacheth us, *Joh.* 15. 19, 20, 21. *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but becauſe ye are not of the world, but I have choſen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*

Now God will have his people learne this leſſon experimentally; *Paul* when he was a perſecuter, and breathed out threatnings againſt the people of God, had good quarter amongſt his own Country-men, was in favour and eſteeme with the high-Prieſt by whom he was entruſted to worry the poor Lambs of Chriſt; but ſo ſoon as the Lord wrought upon him, ſo ſoon as he was converted, who ſo perſecuted, ſcourged, ſtoned, and abuſed? There is a ſtory in the book of Martyrs of one *Herwin* a Martyr in *Flanders*, who being condemned to dye for profeſſing the Goſpell, ſtanding upon the ſtairs of the judgment-Hall, a multitude of people being there preſent, cryed out to them, thus, O people you ſee what entertainment the ſervants of Chriſt have in the World: While I was a drunkard, a ſwearer, a diſſolute perſon, then you all loved me, then you ſaid I was a good fellow, an honeſt neighbour, and you loved me; but ſo ſoon as I began to think of eternity, and what would become of my poor ſoul after death, to pray and follow Gods Ordinances, then was I called Heretick, hated, and now am therefore to be burned.

I have formerly told ſome of you a paſſage which I had from a good hand, that fell out in Queene *Elizabeths* dayes, in the buſineſſe of the Earle of *Eſſex*, there was a ſearch made for conſpirators, and the Guard coming into a Roome where many Noblemens ſervants lay, at that time known by their Badges, the ſearchers asked one and the other, whoſe ſervant are you? and whoſe ſervant are you? who anſwered my Lord ſuch a ones, and ſuch a ones; at laſt they came to one and asked him whoſe ſervant are you? he anſwered I am Gods ſervant; whereupon they cryed out away with him, ſecure him, he is a very ſuſpicious perſon; but putting on his Coate whereon was his badge, they perceived he was ſervant to a Nobleman who was eminent for faithfullneſſe to the Queen, whereupon they cried out, let him alone, he is my Lord —— 's ſervant, he ſmiling anſwered, my Maſters, I ſee *its more ſafe now adayes to be any ones ſervant then Gods ſervant*. I ſhall not ſtand to apply this but come to the third Doctrine, and of that but briefly.

Doct. 3. *That when we are preſſed above meaſure, and have a ſentence of death upon our joy, comfort, liberty, its our duty not to truſt in our ſelves but in God that raiſeth up the dead.*

This was our father *Abrahams* practice for which he is ſo eminent in the Scriptures, when he

had a ſentence of death paſt upon his own body and *Sarahs* womb, yet he conſulted not his own impotency nor *Sarahs* barrenneſſe, but Gods faithfullneſs and abillity, *Rom.*4.17,18,19,20,21. He beleeved God who quickeneth the dead, and calleth theſe things which be not as if they were. And ſo when a ſentence of death was paſſed upon the heir of promiſe, he flies to his old refuge, even to God that raiſeth up the dead, *Heb.*11.19. He offered up his only Son, *accounting that God was able to raiſe him up, even from the dead.* And that it is our duty in our deepeſt preſſures, thus to beleeve in God that raiſeth up the dead, beſide this preſident of the father of the faithfull, ſee that ſweet and famous precept fitted for ſuch a condition. *Iſa.* 50. 10. *Who among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voyce of his ſervant, that walketh in darkneſſe and hath no light? let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God.* When there is not only weakneſſe but a death upon comforts, evidences, aſſurances, *no light*, then its our duty *to leane upon our beloved*, to truſt in the name of the Lord. Though our hands may be ſhortned, our hearts ſtraightned, our hope withered, yet Gods hand nay his heart is not ſtreightned, *verſ.* 2,3. *Is my hand ſhortned at all that it cannot redeeme? or have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the Sea*,&c. I am able to check thy ſtrongeſt doubtings and temptations, I am able to quicken the deadeſt heart. *Eph.* 2. 1. *You hath he quickened who were dead in ſins and treſpaſſes.*

And

And indeed for a poor ſoul in a dead and darke condition thus to truſt in him that raiſeth from the dead, is as one ſaith *fides deo digna* faith worthy ſo powerfull a God.

I might ſhew you how that God doth bring his dear children.

1. Under a ſentence of death many times that they may experimentally know him by this name, *A God that raiſeth up the dead.*

2. What it is to truſt in God, as God that raiſeth up the dead.

3. What grounds we have to truſt in him as ſuch a God, when graces, gifts, and comforts run very low and are ſcarce viſible to us.

But the time calls me to a word or two of Application, and ſo to a concluſion.

Uſe 1. Is this your duty, and are you under feares, doubtings, witherings, preſſures inward and outward? Why now is your time to truſt in God that raiſeth up the dead; beware of limiting the holy One of *Iſrael*; ſay not, can God give meat in the wilderneſs, but commit your ſouls, your all, unto him as unto a faithful Creator, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their ſouls to him as unto a faithful Creator.* You complain you have not that light and warmth as others have; why God ſaid to the Sun, let it be made, and it was made, he cauſeth light to ſhine out of darkneſs. You complain of your withered condition; why he can make thy ſoul *as a watered garden.* You complain of weakneſs,

weak

weak faith, weak comfort, &c. why out of weakneſs he creates ſtrength; *Iſai.* 40. 29. *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no ſtrength he increaſeth might*; he doth not only make the feeble ſtrong, but thoſe that have no ſtrength at all mighty; he hath done it for others that truſted in him, when they were not only weak, but weakneſs it ſelf; *Heb.* 11. 34. *Out of weakneſſe they became ſtrong*; ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας when they were ſo infirm they could not help themſelves, nor could any man help: ſo this kind of weakneſs is called, *Luke* 13. 11. *There was a woman which had a ſpirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wiſe lift up her ſelf.* πνεῦμα ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας, the ſame word, weakneſs of a long ſtanding, now out of ſuch weakneſs Jeſus Chriſt hath raiſed others; have you no ſtrength, are you bowed down and can in no wiſe lift up your ſelves? O truſt in him that can do it, whoſe name is the God that raiſeth up the dead.

Uſe 2. Is there not only weakneſs, extream weakneſs, weakneſs of a long ſtanding, but to your apprehenſion death upon all; dead in prayer, dead in hearing, dead in every duty; Bring your dead hearts to this God, bring them to Jeſus Chriſt who raiſeth up the dead, *John* 5. 21. as that Ruler did his Daughter, Mat. 9. 18. *My daughter is now dead, but come and lay thy hand upon her, and ſhe ſhall live.* Lord, my hope, my comforts, *&c.* are even dead, and lay thy hand upon them, and they ſhall live. Oh how often

often do the beſt of us find the want of a freſh hand upon our hearts and graces? how have ſome of us, and many of Gods Children been as it were laid in the grave, and ſtink of the earth, and remembring what God once did for us when we were dead in ſin, without hope, without God in the world, even looked up to him out of the pit, and cryed unto him out of the belly of hell, with *David*, Pſal. 79. 20. *Thou which haſt ſhewed me great troubles, ſhalt quicken me again, and ſhalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth*: And put this confidence into prayer to good effect: as Pſal. 119. *My ſoul cleaveth unto the duſt, quicken thou me according to thy Word.*

FINIS.